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Man Says CIA Misused Him in Castro Plot

MIAMI, June 3 (AP)—A Miami man says a Central Intelligence Agency-sponsored operation to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro was aborted before the would-be assassins reached Cuba and "we were thrown to the wolves.

Max Gorman Gonzalez said Monday that he and his attorney will file a million-dollar lawsuit against the agency, charging that Gonzalez was "used unwittingly, without his consent or knowledge by the CIA" in the alleged 1968 plot.

Gonzalez, 45, a Miami furniture store owner, said the mission was led by Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis. He said he was subsequently arrested, convicted and served time in prison because of his unwitting involvement with the CIA.

He said the lawsuit will be based in part on a statement made in London Thursday by former CIA Latin America Chief David Phillips. Phillips said the U.S. government warned Castro of a plot to assissinate him in 1968.

Asked about the Phillips statement, Sturgis said the mission Phillips talked about over British television "was very possibly Operation Sword," which was headed by Sturgis and involved Gonzalez and 10 other Americans.

A CIA spokesman said, however, that Sturgis "is not and never has been a CIA man." He had no further comment on Gonzalez' story.

Sturgis, Gonzalez and Jerry Buchanan, a former Florida resident, were convicted in Miami in 1973 of participating in a conspiracy to illegally transport stolen cars into Mexico from Florida and Texas. They said this was part of Operation Sword.